

Matt 6 v13 “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one”

1) Introduction

2) Meaning of Matt 6 v13

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4) How did Jesus handle temptation?

5) How should we handle temptation?

2) Meaning of the Matt 6 v13

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one”

On 8 Dec 2017 the Guardian reports that Pope Francis wants the English translation changed “it implies that God induces temptation, but that is Satan’s department”. The catholic church in France has adapted the prayer & uses the phrase “do not let us fall into temptation” instead.

Good translation does not permit this!! – first line of prayer addresses God as father then several lines use the imperative “your kingdom COME”, “GIVE us this day . .”

This line is different as the ‘you’ form of the subjunctive is used making this a hope or a wish but still addressed to the father.

So the NIV translation is correct but does raise two questions:

a) James 1 v13-14 “When tempted no one should say: “God is tempting me”. For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone . . .”

So if it is not possible for God to tempt us why ask God not to lead us into temptation?

Some look at the original Greek word PEIRASMOS (test, trial or temptation) & think it should be translated ‘trial’ however this makes no sense with the later phrase “but deliver us from evil”

A better explanation is to see “lead us not” in the light of its counterpart “but deliver us” & translate evil (lit ‘the evil’ – most likely referring to Satan) as ‘the evil one’ which the NIV does. So it is the devil who is in view who tempts God’s people to sin & from whom we need rescue.

b) James 1 v 2-4 “Consider it pure joy, my brothers & sisters , when you face trials of many kinds . . .”

So if the bible says trials & temptations are good for us why ask God not to lead us into temptation?

The probable answer is that the prayer is more about overcoming temptation, not avoiding it. So to paraphrase we could say:

“Please don’t lead us into a place where we are tempted because we know we might fail - but if you do . . . deliver us from the evil one.”

There is a humble recognition of weakness & need of God’s help in this prayer.

“The difference between a test & temptation is found in the testers motivations & expectations, the devil tempts that the believer might fail God’s standards of faith & so sin. God tests that he might determine & sharpen true character, with no focus on making the believer fail.” Strong’s

3) Purpose of temptation/trials

James 1 v 2-4 “Consider it pure joy, my brothers & sisters, when you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature & complete, not lacking anything.”

- **MATURITY**

1 Peter 1 v6-7 “though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith – of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may result in praise, glory & honour when Jesus Christ is revealed”

- **FAITH PROVED GENUINE BRINGS GLORY TO GOD**

4) How did Jesus handle temptation?

Matt 4 v1-11

v1 “Jesus led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil”. (Devil does the tempting, God set up the appointment)

Need to see the temptations from two points of view – Devil’s & God’s
Devil – make him sin (that would be game over – there would be no salvation).
God – to strengthen & prepare him for ministry.

From the devil's point of view he picks 3 very familiar vulnerable areas found in 1 John 2 v16

“For everything in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – comes not from the father but from the world”

Lust of the flesh – “If you are . . turn these stones into bread”.

Response: it is written “ Man shall not live by bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.” (Deut 8 v3)

Pride of life – at highest point of the temple (15 storeys up) “If you are . . throw yourself down” for it is written “ he will command angels concerning you . .” (Ps 91 v11-12)

Response: it is written “Do not put the Lord your God to the test” (Deut 6 v16 remembering Ex 17)

Lust of the eyes – “I will give you all the kingdoms of the world . . . if you will bow down & worship me”.

Response: “Away from me Satan” for it is written “Worship the Lord your God & serve him only” (Deut 6 v13). The devil left him & angels came & attended him.

Reasonable that he should eat, have a good reputation & rule over kingdoms (he was God) – the temptation was to take things into his own hands rather than wait for his father's timing.

From God's point of view he was testing Jesus in three areas:

- 1) His attitude to RESOURCES – bread – either trust God to provide at the right time or do it yourself
- 2) His attitude to RESPONSIBILITY – kingdoms – either wait until God gives you responsibility or take it yourself.

Jesus would later say in Matt 28 v18 “All authority in H & E has been given to me . . .”

- 3) His attitude to REPUTATION – angels rescuing you from a high fall would give you instant fame (you'd be the talk of the town) – Jesus was not interested.

Paul writes of Jesus “He made himself nothing” Phil 2 v7

How important that Jesus prevailed. Over the next 3 yrs his reputation would be torn to shreds but he would not care if only he could say to his father. “I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you have given me to do.” John 17 v4

After this note Luke's version adds a detail in 4 v14 “he returned to Galilee in the **power** of the spirit”

Heb 2 v10 “In bringing many sons & daughters to glory, it was fitting that God . . . should make the pioneer of their salvation (Jesus) perfect through what he suffered.”

5) How should we handle temptation

a) Other scriptures that help us

Heb 4 v14b-15 “let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathise with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet he did not sin.”

- **Jesus can empathise**

1 Cor 10 v13 “No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.”

- **God provides a way out**

1 John 5 v18 “We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One who was born of God keeps them safe, and the evil one cannot harm them.”

- **We cannot be harmed**

Eph 6 v11 “Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes”

- **Armour**

b) Lead US not just lead me - knowing & being known

c) Knowing ourselves

Are we aware we live on a battlefield?

Are we aware of where we (or our brothers & sisters) are most vulnerable to attack?

Notice Eve was tempted to give into WEAKNESS, Jesus to give in to STRENGTH (we need to be aware of both dangers)

Giving in to weakness makes us feel useless & can make us ineffective for God.

Giving in to strength makes us feel independent of God (proud)

Extreme poverty or wealth can be a temptation.

Prov 30 v 8b-9 “Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread.

Otherwise I may have too much & disown you and say, ‘Who is the LORD?’ Or I may become poor and steal and so dishonour the name of my God”

We should expect to be tested in the same areas:

Lust of the flesh, Pride of life, Lust of the eyes.

Just remember although the Devil seeks to trip us up, God is refining/ strengthening us.

Allowing us to bring glory to God.

Consequences of yielding to temptation:

- shame (we hide from God)
- guilt (women caught in adultery: he who is without sin to throw the first stone)
- bondage
- separation from God
- spiritual & physical death

There are two lies Satan wants us to believe:

- Just once won't hurt
- Now that you have ruined your life, you are not useful to God so you may as well carry on sinning

Learn from David? - Ps 51 v10 “. . .Create in me a pure heart”

When Martin Luther was asked how he overcame the devil, he replied. “Well, when he comes knocking at the door of my heart, and asks “Who lives here?” the dear Lord Jesus goes to the door and says “Martin Luther used to live here, but he has moved out. Now I live here.” When Christ fills our lives Satan has no entrance.